FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY REVIEW OFFICE

Business Plan 2004-2005

A. Mission Statement:

To provide independent oversight over the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and Part XX of the *Municipal Government Act*; to review decisions of public bodies, local public bodies and municipalities relating to applications for access to records, in accordance with both Acts.

B. Strategic Goals:

1. To encourage the Legislature to amend the Acts to promote more openness and accountability in all public bodies and to provide all Nova Scotians with adequate protection for their personal privacy.

2. To increase the public's awareness of its access and privacy rights.

C. Core Business Areas:

1. At the request of applicants, to review decisions of public bodies with respect to applications for access to information; to examine exemptions cited; to issue public reports; and to make recommendations for changes in public bodies' decisions when the Review Officer concludes it is appropriate to do so.

2. To attempt to mediate differences so as to resolve complaints.

3. To assist in resolving privacy complaints.

4. To defend the interests of the two Acts.

D. Priorities:

1. To persuade the legislature of the importance of giving the Review Officer the power to investigate privacy complaints and, if warranted, to make the results of the investigation public.

2. To ensure timely responses to "requests for review" and privacy complaints.

3. To raise the Review Office's profile within public bodies and with the public.

E. Performance measurement:

Intended Outcome:

1. An improved data base to allow for efficient measuring of response times by public bodies; to track public bodies' decisions on applications for access; to measure the efficiency of the Review Office in handling complaints; to settle more complaints by mediation.

2. Increased number of training sessions for those who administer the Acts for public bodies, and for users of the Act. The aim is to provide two sessions to each group.

F. Human Resources:

- To effect reclassifications that reflect the responsibilities of staff.

- To secure funding to allow for the appointment of a full-time assistant to the Review Officer to enable the office to provide services in both official languages. In December, 2003, the Review Office, with the cooperation of the Office of Acadian Affairs, hired a part-time assistant under the Canada-Nova Scotia General Agreement on the Promotion of Official Languages, Department of Canadian Heritage.